



18 November 2018

Dear Parish Clerk and Councillors

URGENT: Please respond to Shropshire Council's misconceived Local Plan Review

One or more of your villages has been chosen by Shropshire Council to be one of 40 Community Hubs. This means that a significant part of the 7,875 houses they propose to allocate to the Rural areas will be coming your way. We, and people in other proposed Community Hubs, think that the way in which they have chosen the 40 Hubs is flawed. If you think so too, we urge you to tell the Council so.

You will already have had notice that Shropshire Council are currently consulting, until 22nd December, on their Preferred Scale and Distribution of Development, which sets the tone of development in the County until 2036. It proposes 28,750 extra houses over the next 20 years, 14,900 more jobs on 300Ha more employment land, an 'urban focused' distribution of that development, and the new way of identifying Hubs. The relevant documents are all at <https://shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/local-plan-review-preferred-scale-and-distribution-of-development/>.

We believe that their plans for growth are unrealistically ambitious and you can read more about those views on our website at <https://www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/>. CPRE does support growth based on genuine local need, supports building the right homes in the right places, supports building affordable homes, and supports innovative economic growth. But we do not think that the plans as outlined will achieve this.

As for the methodology of choosing the 40 Community Hubs, we found the Council's papers to be cumbersome, and difficult to follow. So we attach a single sheet summarising the relevant information. This shows the scores for the Hubs, and for Shrewsbury and the five principal market towns. The settlements are shown in decreasing order of size. The sheet also shows the current proposed housing allocations for the towns, and the current housing guidelines and statuses under SAMDev.

We urge you to look at this in conjunction with the attached 5-page detailed commentary on the methodology (as set out in the Hierarchy of Settlements document) for choosing the 40 Hubs.

Shropshire Council maintain that because of the response to the previous consultation, the scoring system is no longer subject to further consultation. However, they do say that the way it has been applied in order to identify proposed Community Hubs is open for consultation. However, we believe that the methodology is so flawed, that a case can be made to revisit it, because:

1. Shropshire Council say that 73% of people agreed the methodology as set out in the previous Issues & Options consultation. But because the actual question asked was *Do you agree with the approach and/or the methodology proposed to identify Community Hubs?* we ask what it was that people were actually agreeing to. It is quite possible that they were

agreeing with the general approach of using some sort of 'objective' methodology, rather than agreeing with the precise methodology as set out.

2. The scoring system has been changed quite significantly anyway, and the maximum score has been reduced from 130 to 116. This is shown at the top of the attached single sheet, and commented on further in the attached 5-page commentary.
3. The way the Council has finally picked the 40 Hubs by way of a "three-point gap" and supporting wording is actually at odds with their definition of the features of a Community Hub. Our comments on that are on pages 4 and 5 of the attached 5-page commentary.

So we do urge you to look at the attached documents and to carefully consider whether you agree with how the Council has scored your village(s), including looking at your scores in comparison with those for Shrewsbury and your nearest principal market town.

If you essentially agree with our analysis, and you have not already submitted your consultation response, please let Shropshire Council know your views on your submitted questionnaire. If you cannot fit the text supporting those views into one of the rather small 'comments' boxes on the pdf form, then we suggest putting them into a supplementary document, and submitting that too.

If you have already submitted your consultation response, and also agree with our analysis, would you please consider completing and returning the third page of this letter to us?

The subject of the Hierarchy of Settlements is one of the items on the agenda for the Town and Parish Council Forum to be held from 10am to 12pm on 23rd November in The Guildhall at Frankwell, Shrewsbury, and you may also wish to attend that.

We are also aware that some of you have been invited by Shropshire Council to a meeting on the evening of 29th November at Shire Hall to hear about the Local Plan Review and how the 'Hierarchy of Settlements' affects proposed Community Hubs.

Yours sincerely

CPRE Shropshire



To:
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SUPPORT

_____ Parish Council supports CPRE Shropshire in asking Shropshire Council to reconsider:

- Its scoring system for designating Community Hubs,
- The way in which it has chosen those Community Hubs, in conflict with its own stated definitions of what facilities and services such Hubs should contain.

We also support CPRE Shropshire in questioning the need for such high targets for housing numbers and economic growth.

Signed _____

Date _____